

**OUTCOMES OF THE EIGHTH ANNUAL
TEN STATE RETREAT: COAHUILA 2005.
A REGIONAL APPROACH TO THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER ENVIRONMENT**

Leading officials of the state agencies responsible for environmental quality and protection, and natural resource conservation for the States of **ARIZONA, BAJA CALIFORNIA, CALIFORNIA, CHIHUAHUA, COAHUILA, NEW MEXICO, NUEVO LEÓN, SONORA, TAMAULIPAS and TEXAS** met in Saltillo, Coahuila on May 16-18, 2005 for the Eighth Annual Ten State Retreat: Coahuila 2005. A Regional Approach to the U.S.-Mexico Border Environment.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- To exchange information and learn about successful programs and projects;
- To develop a proposal for the environment section of the 2005 Border Governors' Joint Declaration;
- To discuss and agree on next steps aimed at improving the effectiveness of the Border 2012 Program, and
- To ensure effective state participation in the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) and the North American Development Bank (NADB) Board of Directors.

The participants highlighted Ten State achievements after nine years of on-going cooperation and coordination. The representatives committed to maintain and enhance the dialogue among the environmental agencies of the ten border states, and further improve and strengthen collaborative activities on issues of common interest. They addressed transboundary air quality management as one of the key policy issues for a sustainable border region. The state officials also explored ways to improve cooperation with representatives from other Work Tables and Sub-Committees of the Border Governors' Conference (BGC).

In a special session with federal representatives from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the Mexican Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT), the state participants discussed progress made in the development of environmental indicators for the Border 2012 Program, and recognized the efforts of the U.S. EPA and SEMARNAT to improve transparency and public participation. They recommended additional efforts to improve communication among the different Border 2012 coordinating bodies. Finally, the state officials voiced their opinions on the implementation of the BECC/NADB reform.

The meeting was organized by the Instituto Coahuilense de Ecología with support from the Western Governors' Association (WGA) and the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA). The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality offered to host the 2006 Ten State Retreat.

AGREEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

Border Governors' Conference

- The States will send California individual progress reports on the 2004 BGC Joint Declaration by **May 20, 2005**
- California will develop a 2004 Ten State Progress Report by **May 27, 2005**.
- Nuevo León will draft a Ten State joint proposal for the environment section of the 2005 BGC Joint Declaration and will send it to California by **May 31, 2005**. Each item should include an action plan with responsible individuals and deadlines.
- California will develop a final proposal for the 2005 BGC Joint Declaration by **June 7, 2005**.
- Arizona and Nuevo León will represent the Ten States in the next BGC Planning session to

be held in Tucson, Arizona on **June 16, 2005**.

- Nuevo León will coordinate the efforts of the Mexican States in the Wildlife Sub-Committee starting at the 2005 BGC.
- Nuevo León will identify the progress made by the Wildlife Sub-Committee to fulfill the commitments included in the 2005 BGC Joint Declaration. Nuevo León will help identify the Wildlife Sub-Committee representatives that will attend the next BGC Planning session.
- The Environment Work Table co-chairs, Baja California and California, will send a note to the Governors' representatives to emphasize the need for improved communication among the different Work Tables and Sub-Committees on common or cross-cutting issues.

BECC/NADB Reform

- The Environment Work Table co-chairs, Baja California and California, will send a letter to the six federal agencies members of the BECC/ NADB Board of Directors requesting that the Board Chairmanship be rotated between Board members every year. A copy of the letter will be sent to the ten Border Governors.

Emerging Issues

- **Proposal to Create a BGC Secretariat**. The States will send California comments to the Proposal to Create a BGC Secretariat by **May 31, 2005**.

Supporting Documents:

Proposal to Create a Border Governors Secretariat

Strategy for Indicator Development for Border 2012